

Meeting Minutes  
**November 19, 2015**  
(State House)

**In attendance:** Janet Coit, DEM, Council Chair  
Marion Gold, OER, Vice Chair  
Michelle Burnett, EMA  
Kevin Flynn, Planning  
Dr. Nicole Alexander Scott, HEALTH  
Meredith Brady, DOT  
Darin Early, Commerce RI  
Michael DiBiase, DOA  
Grover Fugate, CRMC

Director Coit (DEM) opened the meeting at approximately 1:10 PM and briefly reviewed the agenda. She welcomed the many guests in the room, thanked the Senate leadership for hosting the EC4 today in the Senate Lounge, and the Governor for her commitments to the work of the EC4.

The first order of business was the minutes from the October 21, 2015 meeting. A motion to accept the minutes was made and unanimously approved.

Director Coit (DEM) provided some brief opening remarks on the importance of the many partners in the room for their support in implementing/guiding/working with the EC4 member agencies on the RI Resilient Act. She thanked EC4 member Kevin Flynn for his dedication to the Council and wished him well in his retirement. Director Coit announced that NESCAUM (the Northeast States for Coordinated Air Use Management) had been picked to serve as the lead consultant on the Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Study the EC4 needs to complete by December 2016. The technical committee that will help guide that project is scheduled to meet for a kick-off meeting on Dec. 15<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 at RIDEM. Lastly, Director Coit commented on the upcoming COP 21 Paris negotiations and how critical that work is for the US and all international partners working on climate change priorities. She turned the floor over the Vice-Chair Marion Gold for additional remarks.

Commissioner Gold (OER) offered some remarks on Kevin Flynn's many contributions to the EC4, and offered updates on the RI Zero Emission Vehicle Action Plan and the Systems Integration RI (SIRI) report (being released today). It will be available shortly on the RI OER website. Executive Director Fugate (CRMC) offered remarks on a recently released NOAA report on damage reduction calculations.

Director Coit (DEM) introduced the panelists. All were asked to address issues of how impacts from climate change affect their business/organization model, the needs and growth potential of their work-force, opportunities and challenges for their business/organization in RI, areas for innovation/growth in their industry, and important ways (over the next ~5 years) that RI state government can support their industry/organization and set the stage for growth and a resilient future in the face of climate change.

Dr. Louis Gritzo (FM Global) – Dr. Gritzo is vice president and manager of research with FM Global – one of the world's largest commercial property insurers. FM Global has the world's largest center for property prevention research in West Glocester, RI. He emphasized the need for a qualified workforce to support RI's growing economy, the need for RI to make consistent, sound land use policy decisions, and the need to protect critical infrastructure/resources.

Josh Brumberger (Utilidata) – Josh is Executive Vice President of Sales Strategy and Business Development for Utilidata based in Providence. Utilidata relocated from the West Coast and has brought numerous jobs to the RI economy. Josh emphasized energy efficiency, demand reduction, enhanced reliability, renewable integration and grid security in today's regional power system. He discussed how he feels RI has the right ingredients to actively address climate change (e.g. political leadership & regulatory framework).

Governor Raimondo joined the meeting and offered some remarks highlighting RI's successful 2015 legislative session on resiliency priorities and her work strategizing with EC4 Chair/Vice-Chair in advance of 2016 legislative session on further progress. She acknowledged our unique vulnerability in RI to climate change, but highlighted our unique opportunities to be creative and collaborate on solutions. The Governor encouraged the EC4 and those in the room to *re-energize* going into 2016 - to work with that much more creativity and urgency, and noted the role of the private sector & the need to modernize RI's regulatory environment.

Shannon Brawley (RI Nursery & Landscape Association) - Shannon has led the RI Nursery and Landscape Association since 2010. As the leading voice in Rhode Island for green jobs in the natural resource based economy, she currently sits on the Quonset Development Corporation Board of Directors and is a past member of the Board of Directors for Commerce RI. She discussed the critical importance of investing in RI's green infrastructure, RINLA's work in Newport, and the green jobs contributions to RI's growing economy.

Zaid Ashai (Nexamp) - As Chairman and CEO of NEXAMP, a solar solutions company, Zaid is helping to bring solar to RI and the northeast. He presented about next generation energy efficient technologies and investments RI can make to ensure a more diversified energy portfolio. As the largest NE solar company in the northeast, he discussed the massive opportunities to grow the solar market in RI, and how it will require strategic public/private planning. Zaid emphasized the need for grid modernization, how RI can take advantage of its small size (e.g. collaboration and innovation), the need to address a patchwork of zoning requirements that can impede progress on solar projects, and the critical need to develop the talent base (e.g. education/skills) to lead RI's growing clean energy economy.

Questions were raised from EC4 members about local zoning controversies in Cranston over solar projects, how to promote good land use decisions, the need to better understand our key vulnerabilities/risks from natural disasters, the need for model ordinances, and predictable taxes on renewables.

During the public comment portion of the agenda, questions were raised about the "social impacts" of disasters, the need to make strides to make RI fossil fuel free, state building code updates, flood insurance enforcement, fees on renewable sources of energy, the need for model ordinances for the installation of renewable energy systems, and water quality/quantity impacts.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 2:15 pm.